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The National Institutes of Health Partners with Local Shopping Mall To “Share the Health” in Wheaton

NIH’s Sixth Annual Premier Health and Fitness Expo Features Free Fitness Activities, Interactive Health Exhibits, Health Screenings, Mini-Lab Sessions, Games, Prizes and More

Bethesda, Md.—Mall shopping promotes health. No, this isn’t a new National Institutes of Health (NIH) research finding, but on Sunday, May 15, 2005, area residents will have a chance to experience the most fun and healthy shopping experience ever imagined! By teaming up with mall management at the newly renovated Westfield Shoppingtown Wheaton in Wheaton Maryland, NIH is sponsoring a day of free health-centered fun for the entire family. *Share the Health: NIH’s Premier Health and Fitness Expo* offers interactive health exhibits, health screenings, hands-on lab experiments, science games, fitness demonstrations, children’s activities and more. Held at Westfield Shoppingtown Wheaton, from 11 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., *Share the Health* provides health information and activities for children, teens, adults and seniors.

Sponsored by the NIH Office of Community Liaison (OCL) and the NIH Recreation and Welfare Foundation, the newly designed event promotes community health through the prevention of disease. Scientists at the NIH, the nation’s premier biomedical research institute, will show us easy and fun ways to improve our fitness and maintain good health. “*Share the Health* allows people of all ages to learn, experience and discover new ways to lead a healthier life,” says OCL Director Thomas Gallagher, Ph.D. “This event is your chance to find out what NIH is, what it does and how it can help improve your life.”

NIH Director, Dr. Elias Zerhouni, describes the *Share the Health* expo as NIH’s chance to bring its message of health to the nation, one community at a time. “I am excited to see NIH increasing its outreach efforts to the local public.” says Zerhouni, “The more people learn about the NIH and our mission; the more they will learn ways of improving the health and wellness of themselves as well as their loved ones.”



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Share the Health

Attendees can discuss their health concerns with NIH physicians and scientists while visiting interactive exhibits from nearly all of NIH's 27 Institutes and Centers. People of all ages can learn about the effects of drugs and alcohol on the brain, dental hygiene, diabetes, bone health, alternative medicine and infectious disease prevention.

Local area hospital staff will offer free health screenings to help community members discover if they are at risk for stroke, high blood pressure, skin problems, osteoporosis or obesity. And NIH information officers will provide the latest in NIH health research through a variety of fun and interactive exhibits.

Community members can surf reliable health-based Web sites and explore consumer-friendly sites such as NIHSeniorHealth.gov and MedlinePlus. Experts will be on hand to show participants how to access health information on the Internet.

Children can don lab coats and goggles to experience what it is like to be an NIH scientist for the day, performing hands-on lab experiments. Extract your own DNA and run electrophoresis gels like a crime scene scientist. They can also jump on a Moon Bounce, play games and win prizes.

Other features include scaling a rock-climbing wall, exploring the "Drunken Brain" and navigating an obstacle course with our Fatal Vision Goggles. Teens can also check out the latest healthy computer games and surf healthy Web sites designed just for them.

Metro's red line to Wheaton station offers the most convenient mode of transportation to the expo. For more information about this free event, call the *Share the Health* Coordinator at 301-496-3931 or visit <http://sharethehealth.od.nih.gov>.

The NIH Office of Community Liaison is dedicated to serving the interests and well being of the community surrounding NIH. Its role at the NIH is to partner with the community to address issues of common interest. The OCL works with community members to provide information about NIH and to share NIH's resources with its neighbors. For more information, visit <http://ocl.od.nih.gov>.

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